



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/583,459	06/19/2006	Arthur H. Thompson	2004UR004	3699
7590	03/27/2008		EXAMINER	
J Paul Plummer ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company P O Box 2189 (Corp-Urc-Sw337) Houston, TX 77252-2189			HUGHES, DEANDRA M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3663	
			MAIL DATE	
			03/27/2008	PAPER
			DELIVERY MODE	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/583,459	THOMPSON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Deandra M. Hughes	3663

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 February 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-7, 10-17 and 19-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1, 8-9, and 18 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/29/08 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 8-10, and 18 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

3. Claims 1, 8-9, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Berg (US 7,042,801 filed Jan. 9, 2004).

4. With regard to claim 1, a method for reducing noise from near-surface conversions (e.g., note last line of col. 13) of EM energy to seismic energy in an electroseismic survey of a subsurface formation (fig. 4), said survey using a plurality of near-surface electrodes (A and B) connected to the output terminals of a source signal generator (#401) for transmission of electrical current into the earth, said method comprising:

- positioning one item of conducting material (#12) or a plurality of such items electrically connected to each other (via #410 and #411) to substantially minimize near-surface electric fields (col. 14, line 3) in a region between or

defined by the item or items of conducting material (at depths deeper than 12 meters; see col. 13, lines 55-60 and col. 14, lines 3-5), thereby providing an area of low surface noise for survey receiver placement (col. 14, lines 1-5; "hiding or masking invalid IEK electromagnetic signals).

With regard to claims 8 and 18, the two electrodes (A and B) are positioned above the formation, positioning at least one far electrode (A) separated by the other electrodes (B) a sufficient distance to cause current to penetrate the earth formation (note line 3 of summary of invention), placing a receiver near the electrodes (fig. 1, #104), applying an electrical signal between the near electrodes and the far electrodes (#401) and measuring the seismic response near the electrodes (via #104).

With regard to claim 9, electrodes A and B are substantially horizontal.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deandra M. Hughes whose telephone number is 571-272-6982. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Keith can be reached on 571-272-6878. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Deandra M Hughes/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3663